

THE
FIRST REPORT
Will: OF THE *Whitland*
Committee of Secrecy
OF THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS,
ON
THE PAPERS

BELONGING TO

The Society for Constitutional Information,

AND

The London Corresponding Society,

SEIZED BY ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, AND PRESENTED
TO THE HOUSE BY MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS,

ON

The 12th and 13th of May 1794.

[PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.]

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FIRST REPORT

FROM THE

Committee of Secrecy.

The COMMITTEE to whom the several Papers referred to in His Majesty's Message of the 12th of May 1794, and which were presented (sealed up) to the House, by Mr. Secretary Dundas, upon the 12th and 13th Days of the said Month, by His Majesty's Command, were referred; and who were directed to examine the Matters thereof, and report the same, as they should appear to them, to the House; have proceeded, in Obedience to the Orders of the House, to the Consideration of the Matters referred to them.

THEY find, on the first inspection, that the books and papers which they are directed to examine contain a full and authentic account of certain proceedings of two Societies, calling themselves The Society for Constitutional Information, and the London Corresponding Society, who appear to be closely connected with other Societies in many parts of Great Britain,

Britain, and in Ireland; and the Committee also observe, from recent circumstances, which have already come under their observation, that these proceedings appear to become every day more and more likely to affect the internal peace and security of these kingdoms, and to require, in the most urgent manner, the immediate and vigilant attention of Parliament.

The Committee have, therefore, thought it their indispensable duty, in the first instance, to submit to the House the general view which they have been enabled to form of these transactions, reserving a more particular statement for a subsequent Report.

In the book containing the Proceedings of the Society for Constitutional Information, which was found in the custody of the person acting as secretary to the Society, there are regular entries of what passed on each day of meeting, from the end of the year 1791 to the 9th of May in the present year.

From these it appears, that during almost the whole of that period, and with hardly any considerable interval, except during part of the summer in 1792 and 1793, this Society has, by a series of resolutions, publications, and correspondence, been uniformly and systematically pursuing a settled design, which appears to your Committee to tend to the subversion of the established Constitution, and which has of late been more openly avowed, and attempted to be carried into full execution.

The principles on which this design is founded are strongly and unequivocally proved, from resolutions formed as early as the 18th of May 1792, in which the Society applaud the intention of publishing a
cheap

cheap edition of the First and Second Parts of The Rights of Man; and resolve, " That a copy of Mr. Paine's Letter (informing them of this intention) together with these Resolutions, be transmitted to all the Associated Societies in town and country; and that this Society do congratulate them on the firm as well as orderly spirit and tranquil perseverance manifested in all their proceedings, and exhort them to a steady continuance therein:" And also, " That 3000 copies of the Letter and Resolution should be printed for the use of the Society." This single circumstance would, in the judgment of your Committee, leave little doubt of the real nature of the designs entertained by this Society: Their conduct in other respects has corresponded with it.

On the 11th of May in the same year they vote an Address, in terms of approbation and applause, to the Society of Jacobins at Paris.

They adopt a similar measure, under circumstances still more striking, by sending, on the 9th of November following, an Address to the National Convention of France, full of panegyric on the French Revolution, and expressing the strongest wishes for its progress and success. This Address was actually presented at the Bar of the Convention by two persons, of the name of Barlow and Frost; and the answer of the President was read at the Meeting of the Society on the 7th of December 1792.

On the 14th of the same month a letter is received from persons calling themselves the Friends of *Liberty* and *Equality*, at Laon, capital of the Department de L'Aisne; and referred by the Society to their Committee of Correspondence.

On

On the 21st of the same month, certain Members are expressly appointed a Committee for Foreign Correspondence.

The proceedings of this Committee are ordered to be entered in a separate book; and a letter received that day from the Friends of Liberty and Equality at Macon is referred to that Committee.

On the 25th of January and on the 1st of February 1793 (at the eve of the commencement of the war, and after the repeated representations which had been made on the part of the British Government, complaining of the conduct of France) the citizens Barrere and Roland (then leading Members of the French Convention) are admitted Associated Honorary Members of the Society; and the speeches of Barrere and St. André (also an Honorary Member of the Society) as given in the Moniteur of the 4th, 6th, and 7th of January, are directed to be inserted in the books of the Society.

Subsequent to the Declaration of War, which interrupted this system of direct correspondence and concert with France, and down to the present time, the Society have continued, on various occasions, to manifest their attachment to the cause of the French Revolution; and have affected to follow, in their proceedings and in their language, the forms and even the phrases which are adopted in that country.

The next leading circumstance which has engaged the attention of your Committee, is the unremitting activity and diligence with which this Society have attempted to disseminate their principles, both by publications and resolutions industriously and extensively circulated, and by endeavouring to establish a
general

general correspondence and concert among the other seditious Societies in the metropolis, and in different parts of England and Scotland, as well as in Ireland. With many of these this Society appears itself to have carried on an immediate correspondence, particularly with those at Sheffield, Norwich, and Manchester, who have, on all occasions, taken the most forward and active part in these transactions. In their correspondence with Norwich in particular, as early as the 12th of April 1793, there is a passage which so clearly marks the real object which (whatever may have been their prettexts) they appear uniformly to have had in view, that your Committee think it right here to insert it.

“ Extract of a Letter from the Secretary to
 “ the Society for Constitutional Informa-
 “ tion, to the Secretary to the United Po-
 “ litical Societies at Norwich; dated 16th
 “ April 1793.

“ Where then are we to look for the remedy?
 “ To that Parliament of which we complain? To
 “ the Executive Power, which is implicitly obeyed,
 “ if not anticipated in that Parliament? Or to
 “ ourselves, represented in some Meeting of Dele-
 “ gates for the especial purpose of Reform, which
 “ we suppose you understand by the term CON-
 “ VENTION.

“ It is the end of each of these propositions that
 “ we ought to look to; and as success in a good
 “ cause must be the effect of perseverance and the
 “ rising reason of the time, let us determine with
 “ coolness, but let us persevere with decision.—
 “ As to a Convention, we regard it as a plan the
 “ most desirable and most practicable, so soon as
 “ the great body of the people shall be courageous
 “ and

“ and virtuous enough to join us in the attempt.
 “ Hitherto we have no reason to believe that the
 “ moment is arrived for that purpose.—As to any
 “ Petition to the Crown, we believe it hopeless in
 “ its consequences. With respect to the last of
 “ the proposals, we are at a loss to advise.—If the
 “ event is looked to in the vote which may be ob-
 “ tained from that body to whom this petition is
 “ to be addressed, which of us can look to it with-
 “ out the prospect of an absolute negative? In this
 “ point of view, therefore, it cannot require a mo-
 “ ment’s consideration. But if we regard the *po-*
 “ *lity* of such a petition, it may, in our apprehen-
 “ sion, be well worth considering as a warning
 “ voice to our present Legislators, and as a signal
 “ for imitation to the majority of the people.
 “ Should such a plan be vigorously and generally
 “ pursued, it would hold out a certainty to our
 “ fellow-countrymen that we are not a handful of
 “ individuals unworthy of attention or considera-
 “ tion, who desire the restoration of the antient li-
 “ berties of England; but, on the contrary, it
 “ might bring into light that host of well-mean-
 “ ing men, who, in the different towns and coun-
 “ ties of this realm, are silently, but seriously, anx-
 “ ious for Reformation in the Government.
 “ We exhort you with anxiety to pursue your
 “ laudable endeavours for the common good, and
 “ never to despair of the public cause.”

But of all the Societies with which they corre-
 sponded, the two of the greatest importance are, The
 London Corresponding Society (which has been al-
 ready referred to, and with whom during this whole
 period the correspondence appears to have been con-
 tinually kept up), and the Assembly which called it-
 self The British Convention at Edinburgh. The first
 of

of these it will be necessary for the Committee to advert to particularly. The proceedings of the second are already sufficiently notorious. It is therefore only necessary here to add, that on the meeting of the Constitutional Society, on the 25th of October last, after their adjournment for the summer, a letter was read from the Secretary of the Convention of the Friends of the People at Edinburgh, to the Secretary of the Corresponding Society—in consequence of which it was resolved, that there should be an extraordinary general meeting, to consider of sending Delegates to a Convention of Delegates of the different Societies in Great Britain, to be held at Edinburgh, for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform.

On the Monday following, the 28th of October, this meeting took place. Two Delegates were chosen, and the following instructions given them :

“ The Delegates are instructed, on the part of
 “ this Society, to assist in bringing forward and
 “ supporting any Constitutional measures for procuring a real Representation of the Commons
 “ of Great Britain in Parliament. That in specifying the redress to be demanded of existing
 “ abuses, the Delegates ought never to lose sight
 “ of the two essential principles—General Suffrage and Annual Representation, together with
 “ the unalienable right in the People to reform.
 “ And that a reasonable and known compensation
 “ ought to be made to the Representatives of the
 “ Nation by a national contribution.
 “ That the Delegates do punctually correspond
 “ with the Society, for the purpose of communicating information, and of receiving such further instructions as the exigency may require.”

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“ And

“ And it was further resolved,

“ That the Society be desired to write to the
 “ different Societies with which this Society is in
 “ correspondence, informing them that the Lon-
 “ don Corresponding Society, together with this
 “ Society, have elected Delegates to the Con-
 “ vention of Delegates to meet at Edinburgh
 “ on the 29th instant; and to request their con-
 “ currence in this important measure.”

The Delegate appears, according to his instruc-
 tions, to have corresponded with the Secretary of
 the Society; but no resolutions are entered on the
 subject, till the 17th of January, subsequent to the
 apprehension and trial of several of the Members
 of the Convention at Edinburgh. On that day
 the Society passed the following Resolutions:

“ Resolved, That law ceases to be an object of
 “ obedience whenever it becomes an instrument
 “ of oppression.

“ Resolved, That we call to mind, with the
 “ deepest satisfaction, the merited fate of the
 “ infamous Jefferies, once Lord Chief Justice of
 “ England, who, at the æra of the glorious Re-
 “ volution, for the many iniquitous sentences
 “ which he had passed, was torn to pieces by a
 “ brave and injured people.

“ Resolved, That those who imitate his example
 “ deserve his fate.

“ Resolved, That the Tweed, though it may
 “ divide countries, ought not and does not make
 “ a separation between those principles of com-
 “ mon severity in which Englishmen and Scotch-
 “ men are equally interested; that injustice in
 “ Scotland is injustice in England; and that the
 “ safety

“ safety of Englishmen is endangered whenever
 “ their brethren in Scotland, for a conduct
 “ which entitles them to the approbation of all
 “ wise, and the support of all brave men, are
 “ sentenced to Botany Bay; a punishment hitherto
 “ inflicted only on felons.

“ Resolved, That we see with regret, but we
 “ see without fear, that the period is fast approaching
 “ when the liberties of Britons must depend not upon reason,
 “ to which they have long appealed, nor on their powers of
 “ expressing it, but on their firm and undaunted resolution
 “ to oppose tyranny by the same means by which it is exercised.

“ Resolved, That we approve of the conduct of the
 “ British Convention, who though assailed by force have not
 “ been answered by arguments; and who, unlike the Members
 “ of a certain Assembly, have no interest distinct from the
 “ common body of the people.

“ Resolved, That a copy of the above Resolutions
 “ be transmitted to Citizen Skirving, Secretary to the
 “ British Convention, who is now imprisoned under colour
 “ of law in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh.”

Subsequent to this period the books of the Society are full of repeated declarations of approbation and attachment, addressed to Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margarot, and Gerald, the persons recently convicted of sedition by the Court of Justiciary in Scotland; and of the most violent and inflammatory attacks on the proceedings of that Court.

Your Committee have thus far traced separately some of the leading proceedings of this Society, as appearing from the entries in their own books. Before

fore they take notice of those of a more recent date, and which are in the present moment of more immediate importance, it becomes necessary to give an account of the other Society, called The London Corresponding Society, because the measures which have been adopted during the last six weeks appear to have been the result of a more particular and intimate concert between the two Societies.

It appears from the evidence before your Committee, that the London Corresponding Society meets occasionally in a body, but that its ordinary meetings are in separate divisions in different parts of the town; that the number of these divisions has been gradually increasing; and that there are now about thirty of them established. That there is a Secretary to each division, another to the whole body, and a General Committee formed from one member of each division. That when the Society originally met (which is stated to have been in 1792) it consisted of about two hundred persons, but that in about six months it had considerably increased, and it was agreed that it should divide itself into ten different divisions; that afterwards it was the plan, that when the numbers of any division amounted to more than thirty, they should divide themselves again. That this has not been strictly adhered to; but nevertheless, in some instances, several separate divisions have been formed out of one. One of these divisions is said now to consist of six hundred persons, and the number of the others to be various.

It farther appears, that this Society has been in the habit of corresponding with the Societies in the country, particularly at Sheffield, Manchester, Bristol, Coventry, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Norwich,

Norwich, Birmingham, Leeds, Newcastle upon Tyne, Royston, York, Hereford, Edinburgh, and different Societies in Scotland.

This Society appears likewise, in the course of the year 1792, to have presented an Address to the French Convention, of a nature similar to that from the Society for Constitutional Information, and to have communicated it to this latter Society, in whose book it is entered.

The Committee are not enabled to lay before the House a connected statement of the proceedings of the Corresponding Society, from the time of its institution, as the Committee are not in possession of any regular journal of them. But they think it right here to insert a *printed* paper, which was found in the custody of the Secretary of the Society, and contains an Address stated to have been agreed upon at a General Meeting of this Society, on the 20th of January last.

[The following is a copy of the said printed Paper.]

“ At a General Meeting of the London Corresponding Society, held at the Globe Tavern, Strand, on Monday the 20th day of January, 1794; Citizen John Martin in the Chair. The following Address to the People of Great Britain and Ireland was read and agreed to.

“ C I T I Z E N S :

“ We find the nation involved in a war, by
 “ which, in the course of ONE campaign, immense numbers of our countrymen have been
 “ slaughtered; a vast expence has been incurred,
 “ our

“ our trade, commerce, and manufactories, are
 “ almost destroyed, and many of our manufac-
 “ turers and artists are ruined, and their families
 “ starving.

“ To add to our affliction, we have reason to
 “ expect, that other taxes will soon be added to the
 “ intolerable load of imposts and impositions with
 “ which we are already overwhelmed; for the
 “ purpose of defraying the expences which have
 “ been incurred, in a fruitless crusade, to re-
 “ establish the odious despotism of France.

“ When we contemplate the principles of this
 “ war, we confess ourselves to be unable to ap-
 “ prove of it, as a measure, either of justice or
 “ discretion;—and if we are to form our calcula-
 “ tion of the result, from what has already passed,
 “ we can only look forward to defeat and the eter-
 “ nal disgrace of the British name.

“ While we are thus engaged in an expensive
 “ and ruinous foreign war, our state at home is
 “ not less deplorable.

“ We are every day told, by those persons who
 “ are interested in supporting the *corruption* list,
 “ and an innumerable host of *sinecure* placemen,
 “ that the Constitution of England is the perfec-
 “ tion of human wisdom; that our laws (we
 “ should rather say, THEIR laws) are the perfec-
 “ tion of justice; and that *their* administration of
 “ those laws is so impartial and so ready, as to af-
 “ ford an equal remedy, both to the rich and to
 “ the poor; by means of which, we are said to be
 “ placed in a state of absolute freedom, and that
 “ our rights and liberties are so well secured to us
 “ as to render all invasion of them impossible.

“ When we ask, how we enjoy these tran-
 “ scendant privileges? we are referred to MAG-
 “ NA CHARTA, and the BILL of RIGHTS;
 “ and

“ and the glorious REVOLUTION, in the year
 “ 1688, is held out to us as the bulwark of British
 “ liberty.

“ CITIZENS:

“ We have referred to *Magna Charta*, to the
 “ *Bill of Rights*, and to the *Revolution*, and we
 “ certainly do find that our ancestors did establish
 “ wise and wholesome laws: But we as certainly
 “ find, that, of the venerable Constitution of our
 “ ancestors, hardly a vestige remains.

“ The only chapters of the Great Charter, which
 “ are now in legal existence, are the 14th and
 “ 29th.

“ The important provision of the 14th chapter
 “ runs thus:

“ A freeman shall not be amerced for a small
 “ fault, but after the manner of the fault; and for
 “ a great fault after the greatness thereof, saving
 “ to him his contenment; and a merchant like-
 “ wise, saving to him his merchandize; and any
 “ other's villain than ours shall be likewise amerced,
 “ saving to him his wainage; and none of the said
 “ amerciements shall be assessed, but by the oath
 “ of honest and lawful men of the vicinage.”

“ But by the usurped power of the judges, in
 “ assessing fines (and what fines!!) in the cases of
 “ misdemeanour; this glorious right of the sub-
 “ ject, of having these fines assessed by the jury
 “ (the only possible protection from slavery and
 “ the vilest oppression), is unjustly and infamously
 “ ravished from us.

“ The provision of the 29th chapter runs thus:

“ No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or be
 “ disseised of his freehold, or liberties, or free
 “ customs,

“ customs, or be outlawed, or exiled, or any other-
 “ wise destroyed, nor we will not pass upon him,
 “ nor condemn him, but by the lawful judgment
 “ of his peers, or by the law of the land. We
 “ will sell to no man, we will not deny, or defer
 “ to any man, either justice or right.”

“ The various methods now in constant prac-
 “ tice by which the benefits of this provision are
 “ totally defeated and destroyed, might induce us
 “ to suppose, that the GREAT CHARTER has
 “ been repealed; if we did not assuredly know,
 “ that it is the fundamental basis of our Consti-
 “ tution; which even the REAL representatives
 “ of the people (much less the miserable nomi-
 “ nees of HELSTONE and OLD SARUM)
 “ have not the right, nor (as we trust it will be
 “ found by experience) the POWER to repeal.
 “ Yet what do we find in practice? Unconstitu-
 “ tional and illegal INFORMATIONS EX
 “ OFFICIO, that is, the arbitrary will of the
 “ King’s Attorney General, usurping the office of
 “ the ACCUSING Jury; and the interested
 “ oath of a vile common informer, with the
 “ judgment of as vile a common trading or pen-
 “ sioned justice, substituted in the room of our
 “ birth-right, an impartial trial *by our country*.

“ Add to this, that the exorbitant expence of
 “ judicial proceedings, the novel practice of arbi-
 “ trarily and repeatedly annulling the verdicts of
 “ Juries, and the dilatory practice of the Courts,
 “ most openly and shamefully contradict the
 “ clause which forbids the denial, the delay, and
 “ the sale of justice.

“ A man accused of FELONY (for which, by the
 “ common law of England, his life and goods are
 “ forfeited) may be bailed on finding two sureties
 “ for

“ for forty pounds each; but upon a charge of
 “ MISDEMEANOUR by *words* only, bail to the
 “ amount of ONE THOUSAND POUNDS has
 “ been demanded.

“ Upon conviction also, for such misdemean-
 “ our, enormous fines, long and cruel imprison-
 “ ments unknown to our ancient laws, and un-
 “ sanctioned by any new statutes, have of late
 “ (and but of late) been too frequently and too
 “ oppressively inflicted. And all this, although
 “ by this Bill of Rights it is declared, that “ ex-
 “ cessive bail shall not be demanded, nor cruel
 “ and unusual punishments inflicted.”

“ If we look to IRELAND, we find that ac-
 “ knowledged privilege of the people, to meet
 “ for the support and protection of their rights
 “ and liberties, is attempted, by terror, to be
 “ taken away by a late infamous Act of Parlia-
 “ ment: Whilst titles of honour—No, but of
 “ dishonour—are lavished; and new sources of
 “ corruption opened, to gratify the greedy pro-
 “ fitution of those, who are the instruments of
 “ this oppression.

“ In SCOTLAND, the wicked hand of power
 “ has been impudently exerted, without even
 “ the wretched formality of an Act of Parliament.
 “ Magistrates have forcibly intruded into the
 “ peaceful and lawful meetings of Freemen; and,
 “ by force, (not only without law, but against
 “ law) have, under colour of magisterial office,
 “ interrupted their deliberations, and prevented
 “ their association.

“ The wisdom and good conduct of the BRI-
 “ TISH CONVENTION at Edinburgh, has
 “ been such, as to defy their bitterest enemies to
 “ name the law which they have broken; not-
 “ withstanding which, their papers have been
 D “ seized,

“ seized, and made use of as evidence against
 “ them, and many virtuous and meritorious in-
 “ dividuals have been, as cruelly as unjustly, for
 “ their virtuous actions, disgraced and destroyed
 “ by infamous and illegal sentences of trans-
 “ portation. And these unjust and wicked judg-
 “ ments have been executed with a rancour and
 “ malignity, never before known in this land; our
 “ respectable and beloved fellow-citizens have
 “ been cast FETTERED into dungeons amongst
 “ felons in the hulks, to which they were not
 “ sentenced.

“ CITIZENS:

“ We all approve the senti-
 “ ments, and are daily repeating the words, for
 “ which these our respectable and valuable bre-
 “ thren are thus unjustly and inhumanly suffering.
 “ We too associate in order to obtain a fair, free,
 “ and full representation of the people in a house
 “ of real national representatives. Are we also
 “ willing to be treated as FELONS, for claiming
 “ this our inherent right, which we are deter-
 “ mined never to forego but with our lives, and
 “ which none but thieves and traitors can wish
 “ to withhold from us? Consider, it is one and
 “ the same corrupt and corrupting influence
 “ which at this time domineers in Ireland, Scot-
 “ land, and England. Can you believe that those
 “ who send virtuous Irishmen, and Scotchmen
 “ fettered with felons to Botany-Bay, do not me-
 “ ditate and will not attempt to seize the first
 “ moment to send us after them? Or if we had
 “ not just cause to apprehend the same inhuman
 “ treatment; if, instead of the most imminent
 “ danger, we were in perfect safety from it;
 should

“ should we not disdain to enjoy any liberty or
 “ privilege whatever, in which our honest Irish
 “ and Scotch brethren did not equally and as fully
 “ participate with us? Their cause then and ours
 “ is the same. And it is both our duty and our
 “ interest to stand or fall together. The Irish Par-
 “ liament and the Scotch Judges, actuated by the
 “ same English influence, have brought us directly
 “ to the point. There is no farther step beyond
 “ that which they have taken. We are at issue.
 “ We must now chuse at once either liberty or
 “ slavery for ourselves and our posterity. Will
 “ you wait till BARRACKS are erected in every
 “ village, and till *subsidized* Hessians and Ha-
 “ noverians are upon us?

“ You may ask perhaps, by what means shall
 “ we seek redress?

“ We answer, that men in a state of civilized
 “ society are bound to seek redress of the griev-
 “ ances from the laws; as long as any redress can
 “ be obtained by the laws. But our common
 “ Master whom we serve (whose law is a law of
 “ liberty, and whose service is perfect freedom)
 “ has taught us not to expect to gather grapes from
 “ thorns, nor figs from thistles. We must have
 “ redress from our own laws, and not from the laws
 “ of our plunderers, enemies, and oppressors.

“ THERE IS NO REDRESS FOR A NA-
 “ TION CIRCUMSTANCED AS WE ARE,
 “ BUT IN A FAIR, FREE, AND FULL
 “ REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE.

“ RESOLVED, That during the ensuing Ses-
 “ sion of Parliament, the General Committee of
 “ this Society do meet daily, for the purpose of
 “ watching the proceedings of the Parliament
 “ and of the administration of the Government

“ of this country. And that upon the first intro-
 “ duction of any bill or motion inimical to the
 “ liberties of the people, such as for **LANDING**
 “ **FOREIGN TROOPS IN GREAT BRI-**
 “ **TAIN** or **IRELAND**, for suspending the
 “ **HABEAS CORPUS ACT**, for proclaiming
 “ **MARTIAL LAW**, OR FOR **PREVENT-**
 “ **ING THE PEOPLE** FROM MEETING IN
 “ **SOCIETIES** for **CONSTITUTIONAL IN-**
 “ **FORMATION**, or any **OTHER INNOVA-**
 “ **TION** of a similar nature, that on any of these
 “ emergencies, the General Committee shall issue
 “ summonses to the Delegates of each Division,
 “ and also to the Secretaries of the different So-
 “ cieties affiliated and corresponding with this
 “ Society, forthwith to call a **GENERAL CON-**
 “ **VENTION** of the **PEOPLE**, to be held at
 “ such place and in such a manner as shall be spe-
 “ cified in the summons, for the purpose of taking
 “ such measures into their consideration.

“ Resolved, that the preceding Address and
 “ Resolution be signed by the Chairman, and
 “ printed and published.

“ J. MARTIN, CHAIRMAN.

“ T. HARDY, SECRETARY.”

“ COMMITTEE ROOM, January 23, 1794.

“ *RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,*

“ That a hundred thousand Copies of the Ad-
 “ dress to the People of Great Britain and Ire-
 “ land, voted at the General Meeting, be printed
 “ and distributed by the Society.

“ *Resolved Unanimously,* That the following
 “ toasts, drank at the Anniversary Dinner of the
 “ Society, be printed at the end of the Address.

“ I. THE

“ I. THE RIGHTS OF MAN; and may
“ Britons never want spirit to assert them.

“ II. *The British Convention*, lately held at
“ Edinburgh; and success to the important object
“ it had in view.

“ III. *Citizen William Skirvin* charged by the sen-
“ tence of the Court of Justiciary, with the *honour*
“ of being the cause of calling that Convention.

“ IV. *The London Corresponding Society*, and
“ other patriotic Societies of Great Britain and
“ Ireland.

“ V. *Citizen Maurice Margarot*, the condemn-
“ ed Delegate of this Society; and may his *manly*
“ and *patriotic* conduct be rewarded by the at-
“ tachment of the people.

“ Citizen Gerrald then arose, and in a stream
“ of inspiring eloquence, pronounced the just
“ eulogium of this truly valuable Citizen, so em-
“ phatically called by *Citizen Aitchinson* (one of
“ the witnesses on his trial) the SECOND SID-
“ NEY. He concluded with wishing we might
“ rather *die the last of British Freemen*, than live
“ *the first of slaves*.

“ VI. *Citizen Joseph Gerrald*, the other Dele-
“ gate of this Society, now under prosecution;
“ and may his concluding sentiment be engraved
“ upon every British heart.

“ VII. The transactions at *Toulon*. May
“ Britons remember them as they ought, and
“ profit by *dear bought experience*.

“ VIII. *Citizen Hamilton Roan*, and the other
“ *true patriots of Ireland*; and may the authors
“ of the *Convention-bill* find that they have com-
“ mitted a *bull*.

“ IX. *Citizens Muir, and Palmer*—May their
“ sentence be speedily reversed, and *Botany-Bay*
“ be peopled with a colony of *real criminals*.

“ X. Suc-

“ X. Success to the arms of *freedom* against
“ whomsoever directed ; and confusion to *despots*
“ with whomsoever allied.

“ XI. All that is *good* in *every constitution* ;
“ and may we never be superstitious enough
“ to reverence in *any* that which is *good* for
“ *nothing*.

“ XII. *Citizen Thomas Paine*—May his vir-
“ tue rise superior to calumny and suspicion,
“ and his name still be dear to Britons.

“ XIII. *Lord Loughborough*, the *Earl* of
“ *Meira*, *Sir Gilbert Elliot*, and the other apos-
“ tates from liberty ; and may they enjoy the
“ profits of their apostacy *so long as they live*.

“ XIV. A speedy and honourable *peace* with
“ the *brave republic of France*.

“ XV. The *starving manufacturers* and ne-
“ glected *peasantry* of Great Britain and Ireland.

“ XVI. *Citizen John Frost* ; and a speedy
“ restoration of that health which he lost in the
“ dungeons of Newgate.

“ XVII. The *virtuous and spirited Citizens*,
“ now in confinement for matters of *opinion* :
“ And may we shew them by our conduct, that
“ they are not forgotten.”

On this paper it appears unnecessary to offer any
comment, or to do more than call the attention of
the House to the concluding Resolution.

On the 27th of March the Society sent a letter to
the Society for Constitutional Information, to which
the Committee also feel it right to call the attention
of the House, as it led to the particular concert,
already taken notice of, between the two Societies,
and to the recent measures founded thereupon,
which now remain to be taken notice of.

This

This letter, and the Resolutions of the two Societies in consequence, are stated in a *printed* paper, which was likewise found in the custody of the Secretary of the Society, a copy of which is here subjoined. They are also entered in the book of the Society for Constitutional Information.

“ March 27th, 1794.

“ To the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

“ CITIZEN,

“ I am directed by the London Corresponding
 “ Society to transmit the following Resolutions
 “ to the Society for Constitutional Information,
 “ and to request the sentiments of that Society
 “ respecting the important measures which the
 “ present juncture of affairs seems to require.
 “ The London Corresponding Society conceives
 “ that the moment is arrived when a full and
 “ explicit declaration is necessary from all the
 “ friends of freedom—Whether the late illegal
 “ and unheard-of prosecutions and sentences
 “ shall determine us to abandon our cause, or
 “ shall excite us to pursue a radical reform with
 “ an ardor proportioned to the magnitude of
 “ the object, and with a zeal as distinguished on
 “ our parts as the treachery of others in the same
 “ glorious cause is notorious. The Society for
 “ Constitutional Information is therefore required
 “ to determine whether or no they will be ready,
 “ when called upon, to act in conjunction with
 “ this and other Societies to obtain a fair representation of the people: Whether they concur
 “ with us in seeing the necessity of a speedy
 “ Convention, for the purpose of obtaining, in
 “ a constitutional and legal method, a redress of
 “ those

“ those grievances under which we at present
 “ labour, and which can only be effectually re-
 “ moved by a full and fair representation of the
 “ people of Great Britain. The London Cor-
 “ responding Society cannot but remind their
 “ friends, that the present crisis demands all the
 “ prudence, unanimity, and vigour, that ever
 “ was or can be exerted by men or Britons ; nor
 “ do they doubt but that manly firmness and
 “ consistency will finally, and they believe short-
 “ ly, terminate in the full accomplishment of
 “ all their wishes.

“ I am, Fellow Citizen,

“ (In my humble measure)

“ A Friend to the Rights of Man,

“ T. HARDY, Secretary.

“ Resolved Unanimously,

“ I. That dear as justice and liberty are to
 “ Britons, yet the value of them is compara-
 “ tively small without a dependence on their
 “ permanency ; and there can be no security for
 “ the continuance of any right but in equal
 “ laws.

“ II. That equal laws can never be expected
 “ but by a full and fair representation of the
 “ people. To obtain which, in the way pointed
 “ out by the Constitution, has been and is the
 “ sole object of this Society. For this we are
 “ ready to hazard every thing, and never, but
 “ with our lives, will we relinquish an object
 “ which involves the happiness, or even the po-
 “ litical existence, of ourselves and posterity.

“ III. That it is the decided opinion of this
 “ Society, that to secure ourselves from future
 “ illegal and scandalous prosecutions, to prevent
 “ a repetition of wicked and unjust sentences,
 “ and

“ and to recal those wise and wholesome laws
 “ that have been wrested from us, and of which
 “ scarcely a vestige remains, there ought to be
 “ immediately a Convention of the people, by
 “ delegates deputed for that purpose from the
 “ different Societies of the friends of freedom
 “ assembled in the various parts of this nation.
 “ And we pledge ourselves to the public to pur-
 “ sue every legal method speedily to accomplish
 “ so desirable a purpose.

“ It was resolved by the Society for Constitu-
 “ tional Information, That their Secretary should
 “ assure the London Corresponding Society, that
 “ they heartily approved of their intentions, and
 “ would co-operate with them in obtaining an
 “ object of so much importance to the peace
 “ and happiness of Society. And that he also
 “ request the London Corresponding Society to
 “ send a delegation of its members to confer
 “ upon the subject, with an equal number of the
 “ Society for Constitutional Information.

“ A meeting of the Delegates from the two So-
 “ cieties being held, they came to the following
 “ resolutions.

“ Resolved,

“ First, That it appears to this Committee
 “ very desirable, that a Convention or General
 “ Meeting of the friends of liberty should be called
 “ for the purpose of taking into consideration the
 “ proper methods of obtaining a full and fair
 “ Representation of the People.

“ Second, That it be recommended to the So-
 “ ciety for Constitutional Information, and London
 “ Corresponding Society, to institute a regular
 “ and pressing correspondence with all those parts

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“ of

“ of the country where such measures may be
 “ likely to be promoted, not only to instigate the
 “ Societies already formed, but to endeavour also
 “ to produce such other Associations as may fur-
 “ ther the general object.

“ Third, That it appears to this Committee,
 “ that the general object would be promoted if a
 “ Standing Committee of Co-operation between
 “ the two Societies were established, for the pur-
 “ pose of holding personal communications with
 “ such Members of similar Societies in other parts
 “ of the country, as may occasionally be in Lon-
 “ don, and who may be authorised by their respec-
 “ tive Societies to act with such Committee.”

“ The above resolutions being reported to the
 “ Society for Constitutional Information, it was
 “ by them resolved, that the same should be en-
 “ tered on their books as part of the proceedings
 “ of the Society; and the Committee of Corre-
 “ spondence was appointed to co-operate with
 “ the Committee of the London Corresponding
 “ Society, in conformity with the third resolu-
 “ tion.”

It further appears, from correspondence of a re-
 cent date between different Societies in the country
 and the Secretary of the Corresponding Society,
 that some time in the course of a few weeks past,
 Circular Letters had actually been sent to different
 parts of the kingdom, on the subject of assembling
 a Convention, and a *printed* paper to this effect has
 been found in the custody of the Secretary to the
 Society; which is here inserted, and which your
 Committee have good reason to believe is a copy
 of the Circular Letter referred to.

[The

[The following is a Copy of the said printed Paper.]

“ CITIZENS!

“ The critical moment is arrived, and Britons
 “ must either assert with zeal and firmness their
 “ claims to liberty, or yield without resistance
 “ to the chains that ministerial usurpation
 “ is forging for them. Will you co-operate
 “ with us in the only peaceable measure that now
 “ presents itself with any prospect of success?
 “ We need not intimate to you that, notwithstanding the unparalleled audacity of a corrupt
 “ and overbearing Faction, which at present tramples on the rights and liberties of the people,
 “ our meetings cannot in England be interrupted
 “ without the previous adoption of a Convention
 “ Bill: A measure it is our duty to anticipate,
 “ that the ties of union may be more firmly drawn,
 “ and the sentiments and views of the different
 “ Societies throughout the nation be compared,
 “ while it is yet in our power, so as to guide and
 “ direct the future operations of the Friends of
 “ Freedom. Rouse then to one exertion more;
 “ and let us shew our consciousness of this important truth—“ If we are to be beaten down
 “ with threats, prosecutions, and illegal sentences,
 “ we are unworthy—we are incapable of liberty.”—We must, however, be expeditious. Hessians and Austrians are already among us; and, if
 “ we tamely submit, a cloud of these armed
 “ Barbarians may shortly be poured in upon us.
 “ Let us form, then, another British Convention.
 “ We have a central situation in our view, which
 “ we believe would be most convenient for the
 “ whole island; but which we forbear to mention,
 “ (entreating your confidence in this particular)
 “ till we have the answer of the Societies with

" which we are in correspondence. Let us have
 " your answer, then, by the 20th, at farthest,
 " earlier if possible, whether you approve of the
 " measure, and how many Delegates you can
 " send, with the number also, if possible, of your
 " Societies.

" We remain yours, in civic affection,
 " THE LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.

" T. HARDY, Secretary.

" For the management of this business we have
 " appointed a Secret Committee; you will judge
 " how far it is necessary for you to do the same."

Subsequent to the proceedings now stated, there was another general meeting of the Corresponding Society, held at Chalk Farm; the proceedings of which are stated in a *printed* paper likewise found on the Secretary of the Society, and which your Committee find has been circulated by order of the Society.

This paper is here inserted (as follows):

" At a GENERAL MEETING of the London
 " Corresponding Society, held on the Green
 " at Chalk Farm, on Monday the 14th of April
 " 1794, J. LOVETT in the Chair, *The fol-*
 " *lowing Letters were read.*

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIETY
 OF THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE.

" SIR,

" AT a crisis so important as the present, there
 " needs no apology on the part of the "*London*
 " *Corresponding Society*," for addressing itself to
 " all other associated Societies, who have in view
 " the same object as themselves.

" To

" To the "*Society of the Friends of the People*,"
 " arguments are not wanting to shew the import-
 " ance and absolute necessity of a full and fair
 " representation of the people of Great Britain.
 " *They* have investigated the subject for them-
 " selves; *they* have exposed to the world a series
 " of plain and indisputable facts, which must ex-
 " cite in the mind of every man well disposed to
 " his country, apprehensions of alarm for the se-
 " curity of the few remaining vestiges of liberty,
 " from which, as Britons, we derive consolation.
 " Deeply impressed with considerations of this
 " nature, the London Corresponding Society
 " earnestly solicits, at this time, the concur-
 " rence and assistance of the *Society of the Friends*
 " *of the People*, in assembling, as speedily as the
 " nature of the business will admit, a Conven-
 " tion of the Friends of Freedom, for the purpose
 " of obtaining, in a legal and constitutional me-
 " thod, a full and effectual representation.
 " Our request is not made from the impressions
 " of the moment, but after the maturest delibe-
 " rations on the value and importance of the ob-
 " ject for which we are contending, and of the
 " difficulties we may expect from those whose
 " present interests render them hostile to the
 " welfare of their country.
 " The opposition of such persons is no small
 " argument for the goodness of our cause; and
 " their late conduct, when compared with their
 " former professions, exhibits a depravity, unpa-
 " ralleled, we trust, on the page of history.
 " Under the auspices of apostate reformers, we
 " have lately beheld serious and alarming en-
 " croachments on the liberties of the people.
 " We have seen with indignation and horror
 " men

“ men *legally* and *peaceably* assembled, dispersed
 “ by unconstitutional powers, and their papers
 “ seized.

“ We have seen some of our most virtuous
 “ brethren, whose only crime has been an imita-
 “ tion of Mr. PITT, and his associates, sentenced
 “ to fourteen years transportation, without the
 “ sanction of law, or even of precedent, of
 “ which number, one was held up in the British
 “ Parliament as *convicted* and *condemned*, before
 “ he was even put upon his trial.

“ The insidious attempts also to introduce
 “ foreign troops into this country, without the
 “ consent of Parliament, and the intended bill to
 “ embody foreigners into his Majesty's service,
 “ are measures sufficiently calculated to awaken
 “ our fears for the existence even of the name of
 “ liberty. Nor can we overlook that part of the
 “ present system of corruption, which maintains
 “ out of the public plunder, a train of spies,
 “ more dangerous to society than so many assas-
 “ sins, whose avowed business is to destroy the
 “ friends of the country, one by one.

“ These are grievances which demand immedi-
 “ ate redress, and when added to those evils
 “ which are necessarily connected with every
 “ *partial* representation of the people, call for
 “ the strenuous exertions of every lover of his
 “ country.

“ But we are told that the present is not the
 “ time for reform, and that innovation may in-
 “ troduce disturbance. Are those persons to
 “ judge of the proper time to make a reform,
 “ who exist only by corruption? Are the people
 “ of Britain to endure every thing without repin-
 “ ing, without ardently seeking a radical reform,
 “ because

“ because disturbances *may* happen? Have the
 “ enemies to reform told us whence these disturb-
 “ ances are to originate? Has a single overt act
 “ been committed by the friends to freedom?
 “ Have not all the riots, all the public disturb-
 “ ances, all the seditious assemblies been excited
 “ by the enemies to reform? And do they mean
 “ to tell us that they will still find other instru-
 “ ments for their wicked designs; that they have
 “ yet those who will act over again the outrages
 “ that have been perpetrated in some parts of
 “ Britain, and attempted in others?

“ If such is the determination of those persons
 “ *hostile* to a *fair* representation, *let them look to*
 “ *the consequences*, but let them recollect that it
 “ has happened, and may happen again, that
 “ those who kindled the flames have perished by
 “ them.

“ The friends to *reform* are friends to *peace*,
 “ their principles can be promoted only by peace-
 “ able means, they know of no other method of
 “ obtaining the object they desire. But they will
 “ not be alarmed by the threats of *venal apostates*,
 “ they will not draw back because they have seen
 “ some of their best friends doomed to exile.
 “ They will pursue the course in which they have
 “ began, and turn neither to the right nor to the
 “ left.

“ Convinced as the London Corresponding
 “ Society is, that as there is no power which
 “ *ought*, so there is no power which *can* finally
 “ withstand the just and steady demands of a peo-
 “ ple resolved to be free; they will therefore look
 “ with confidence to the *determination*, and they
 “ hope to the *co-operation* of the “ *Society of the*
 “ *Friends of the People*,” in the attainment of an
 “ object

" object which involves the dearest interests of
" society.

" Convinced also that their intentions are of
" the purest kind, they will never stoop to answer
" the calumnies of their enemies; but will at all
" times, and in all circumstances, endeavour, by
" firmness and perseverance, to deserve the coun-
" tenance and approbation of the best friends of
" their country, *the friends of a fair representation*
" *of the people of Great Britain.*

" I am, Sir,

" For the London Corresponding Society,

" THOMAS HARDY, SEC."

" April 4, 1794.

" COMMITTEE ROOMS.

" FRITH-STREET, April 11, 1794.

" SIR,

" YOUR letter of the 4th instant, addressed to
" Mr. SHERIDAN, Chairman of the FRIENDS
" OF THE PEOPLE, was laid before that
" SOCIETY at their meeting on Saturday last;
" and they instructed their Committee to thank
" the LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCI-
" ETY for their communication, and to express
" the alarm they feel in common with every
" friend of liberty, at the late extraordinary pro-
" ceedings of Government, so ably detailed, and
" so justly reprobated by your Society. They
" assure you that all the friends of reform may
" 'look with confidence to the determination and
" co-operation' of this Society in every peaceable
" and constitutional measure, which shall appear
" to

to them calculated to promote the object of
 " their institution; but they do not think that
 " which is recommended in your letter, is likely
 " to serve its professed purpose. They fear it
 " will furnish the enemies of reform with the
 " means of calumniating its advocates, and so far
 " from forwarding the cause, will deter many
 " from countenancing that which they approve.
 " For these reasons, the Friends of the People must
 " decline to send delegates to the Convention
 " proposed by the London Corresponding Soci-
 " ety: At the same time, they renew their assur-
 " ances of good will, and desire of preserving a
 " proper understanding and cordiality among all
 " the friends of parliamentary reform, notwith-
 " standing any difference of opinion that may
 " occur as to the best method of accomplishing it.

" In name, and by order of the Com-
 " mittee,

" (Signed) W. BRETON, Chairman."

To Mr. T. HARDY, Secretary to the
 London Corresponding Society.

" The following RESOLUTIONS were then passed
 " unanimously:

" Resolved unanimously,
 " I. THAT this Society have beheld with rising
 " indignation, proportioned to the enormity of
 " the evil, the late rapid advances of despotism in
 " Britain; the invasion of public security; the
 " contempt of popular opinion; and the violation
 " of all those provisions of the Constitution in-
 " tended to protect the people against the en-
 " croachments of power and prerogative.

F

" II That

“ II. That our abhorrence and detestation have
 “ been particularly called forth by the late arbitrary and flagitious proceedings of the Court of
 “ Justiciary in Scotland, where all the doctrines
 “ and practices of the *Star Chamber*, in the times
 “ of Charles the First, have been *revived* and
 “ *aggravated*; and where sentences have been
 “ pronounced in open violation of all law and
 “ justice, which must strike deep into the heart of
 “ every man the melancholy conviction that
 “ BRITONS ARE NO LONGER FREE.

“ III. That the whole proceedings of the late
 “ British Convention of the People at Edinburgh
 “ are such as claim our approbation and applause.

“ IV. That the conduct of Citizens MARGAROT
 “ and GERALD in particular, by its strict conformity with our wishes and instructions, and the
 “ ability, firmness, and disinterested patriotism
 “ which it so eminently displayed, has inspired an
 “ enthusiasm of zeal and attachment, which no
 “ time can obliterate, and no persecution remove;
 “ and that we will preserve their names engraven
 “ on our hearts till we have an opportunity to redress their wrongs.

“ V. That any attempt to violate those yet remaining laws, which were intended for the security of Englishmen against the tyranny of Courts
 “ and ministers, and the corruption of dependent
 “ judges, by vesting in such judges a legislative or
 “ arbitrary power, (such as has lately been exercised by the Court of Justiciary in Scotland)
 “ ought to be considered as dissolving entirely the
 “ social compact between the English nation and
 “ their Governors, and driving them to an immediate appeal to that incontrovertible maxim of
 “ eternal justice, *that the safety of the people is the*

“ SUPREME,

“ SUPREME, and, in cases of necessity, the ONLY
“ law.

“ VI. That the arming and disciplining in this
“ country, either with or without the consent of
“ Parliament, any bands of *emigrants and foreign-*
“ *ers, driven from their own country for their known*
“ *attachment to an* INFAMOUS DESPOTISM, is an
“ outrageous attempt to *overawe* and *intimidate* the
“ free spirit of Britons ; to subjugate them to an
“ army of *mercenary cut-throats, whose views and*
“ *interest* must of necessity be in direct opposition
“ to those of the nation, and that *no pretence*
“ *whatever* OUGHT to induce the people to submit
“ to so *unconstitutional* a measure.

“ VII. That the unconstitutional project of raising
“ money and troops by forced benevolences, (and no
“ benevolences collected upon requisition from the
“ King or his ministers can ever in reality be vo-
“ luntary) and the equally unjustifiable measure of
“ arming one part of the people against the other,
“ brought Charles the First to the block, and drove
“ James the Second and his posterity from the
“ throne; and that consequently ministers, in ad-
“ vising such measures, ought to consider whether
“ they are not guilty of High Treason.

“ VIII. That this Society have beheld with con-
“ siderable pleasure the *consistent respect* which the
“ House of Lords displayed for their own Consti-
“ tutional rules and orders on the fourth of the
“ present month upon the motion of Earl Stan-
“ hope, concerning the interference of ministers
“ in the internal Government of France; and that
“ it is the firm conviction of this Society, that
“ this circumstance, when properly detailed, will
“ have a considerable effect in convincing the
“ country at large of the true dignity and utility

“ of that branch of HIS MAJESTY'S PARLIAMENT.

“ IX. That the thanks of this meeting be given to EARL STANHOPE for his manly and patriotic conduct during the present session of Parliament ; a conduct which (unsupported as it has been in the senate, of which HE is so truly honourable a Member) has, together with the timely interference of certain spirited and patriotic Associations, been nevertheless already productive of the salutary effect of chasing the Hessian and Hanoverian mercenaries from our coasts, who, but for these exertions, might have been marched perhaps ere this into the very heart of the country, together with others of their countrymen, to have peopled the BARRACKS which every-where insult the eyes of Britons.

“ X. That it is the firm conviction of this Society that a steady perseverance in the same bold and energetic sentiments which have lately been avowed by the Friends of Freedom cannot fail of crowning with ultimate triumph the virtuous cause in which we are engaged, since whatever may be the interested opinion of hereditary senators, or packed majorities of pretended representatives, Truth and Liberty, in an age so enlightened as the present, must be invincible and omnipotent.”

“ *This Society having already addressed*
 “ M. MARGAROT, *their Delegate, an ADDRESS to JOSEPH GERALD was read*
 “ *as follows, and carried unanimously.*

“ To

“ To JOSEPH GERALD, a prisoner sentenced by the High Court of Justiciary of Scotland, to Transportation beyond the Seas for FOURTEEN YEARS!

“ WE behold in you our beloved and respected friend and fellow-citizen, a martyr to the glorious cause of equal Representation, and we cannot permit you to leave this degraded country without expressing the infinite obligations the people at large, and we in particular, owe to you for your very spirited exertions in that cause upon every occasion; but upon none more conspicuously than during the sitting of the BRITISH CONVENTION of the PEOPLE at Edinburgh, and the consequent *proceeding* (we will not call it *trial*) at the bar of the Court of Justiciary.

“ We know not which most deserves our admiration, the splendid talents with which you are so eminently distinguished, the exalted virtues by which they have been directed, the perseverance and undaunted firmness which you so nobly displayed in resisting the wrongs of your insulted and oppressed country, or, your present manly and philosophical suffering under an *arbitrary* and, till of late, *unprecedented* sentence—a sentence, one of the most vindictive and cruel that has been pronounced since the days of that most infamous and *ever-to-be-detested* Court of Star Chamber, the enormous tyranny of which cost the first Charles his head.

“ To you and to your associates we feel ourselves most deeply indebted. For us it is that you are suffering the sentence of transportation with felons, the vilest outcasts of society! For us it is that you are doomed to the inhospitable shores of New Holland; where, however, we

“ doubt

“ doubt not you will experience considerable al-
 “ leviation by the remembrance of that VIRTUOUS
 “ CONDUCT for which it is imposed on you, and
 “ by the sincere regard and esteem of your fellow-
 “ citizens.

“ The equal laws of this country have, for
 “ ages past, been the boast of its inhabitants : But
 “ whither are they now fled ? We are animated
 “ by the same sentiments, are daily repeating the
 “ same words, and committing the same actions
 “ for which you are thus infamously sentenced ; and
 “ we will repeat and commit them until we have
 “ obtained redress ; yet we are unpunished ! Ei-
 “ ther therefore the law is unjust towards you in
 “ inflicting *punishment* on the exertions of *virtue*
 “ *and talents*, or it *ought* not to deprive us of *our*
 “ *share* in the GLORY of the *martyrdom*.

“ We again, therefore, pledge ourselves to you
 “ and to our country, never to cease demanding
 “ our rights from those who have usurped them,
 “ until having obtained an Equal Representation
 “ of the People, we shall be enabled to hail you
 “ once more with triumph to your native country.
 “ We wish you health and happiness ; and be
 “ assured we never, *never* shall forget *your name*,
 “ *your virtues*, nor YOUR GREAT EXAMPLE.

“ The London Corresponding Society.

“ JOHN LOVETT, Chairman.

“ THOMAS HARDY, Secretary.

“ The 14th of April 1794.”

“ *It was also unanimously resolved,*

“ That the Committee of Correspondence be
 “ directed to convey the approbation of this
 “ Society—I. To Archibald Hamilton Rowan,
 “ prisoner in the Newgate of the city of Dublin,
 “ for

“ for his unshaken attachment to the people, and
 “ for his spirited assertion of their rights.

“ II. To John Philpot Curran, for his admirable
 “ and energetic defence of A. H. Rowan, and
 “ the principles of liberty, as well as for his pa-
 “ triotic conduct in Parliament.

“ III. To the Society of United Irishmen in
 “ Dublin, and to exhort them to persevere in
 “ their exertions to obtain justice for the people
 “ of Ireland.

“ IV. To Skirving, Palmer, and Muir, suf-
 “ fering the same iniquitous sentences, and in the
 “ same cause with our Delegates.

“ V. To John Clark, and Alexander Reid,
 “ for their so readily and disinterestedly giving
 “ bail for our Delegates, instigated thereto solely
 “ by their attachment to liberty, uninfluenced by
 “ any personal consideration.

“ VI. To Adam Gillies, Malcolm Laing, and
 “ James Gibson, for their able assistance given to
 “ Joseph Gerald, at the bar of the High Court
 “ of Justiciary at Edinburgh.

“ VII. To felicitate Thomas Walker, of Man-
 “ chester, and the people at large, on the event
 “ of his, as well as several other late trials, and
 “ on the developement of the infamy of a system
 “ of spies and informers.

“ VIII. To Sir Joseph Mawbey, for his manly
 “ conduct at the late surreptitious Meeting held
 “ at Epsom in Surrey.

“ *It was also unanimously Resolved,*

“ That 200,000 copies of the Proceedings and
 “ Resolutions of this Meeting be printed and
 “ published.

“ J. LOVETT, Chairman.

“ T. HARDY, Secretary.

“ *Resolved,*

“ Resolved,

*“ That the thanks of this Meeting be given to
“ the Chairman, for his manly and impartial con-
“ duct this day.*

“ T. HARDY, Secretary.”

From a review of these transactions your Committee feel it impossible not to conclude, that the measures which have been stated are directed to the object of assembling a meeting which, under the name of a General Convention, may take upon itself the character of a General Representative of the People. However at different periods the term of Parliamentary Reform may have been employed, it is obvious that the present view of these Societies is not intended to be prosecuted by any application to Parliament, but, on the contrary, by an open attempt to supersede the House of Commons in its representative capacity, and to assume to itself all the functions and powers of a National Legislature.

This object, as what is really intended to be attained by assembling a Convention, appears expressly and pointedly stated, even as early as the 15th of April 1793, in the letter to the United Societies at Norwich, already referred to, and the same letter sufficiently explains the policy in consequence of which, subsequent to that period, the topic of Parliamentary Reform has been still ostensibly brought forward in some of the communications which have been made public. As a further illustration of this observation, your Committee think it not immaterial to remark, that in a letter from Margarot, at Edinburgh, to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information, in December 1793, it is particularly recommended to him not to introduce politics

tics in his letter, or at *least* nothing but what *concerns Reform*. Whatever disguise however may have been employed in an earlier period, seems in the later proceedings to have been wholly relinquished. The object is still stated to be a fair and equal representation of the people; but a General Convention of the People, to be chosen by the Delegates of the different Societies, is proposed for the purpose of obtaining this end. No mention is made of any application to Parliament, or of any amendment of the representation in *Parliament*.

The circular letter, inserted in a former part of this Report, recommends forming another British Convention, to be held in a central situation most convenient for the whole island; and states the appointment of a Secret Committee for that purpose.

The third resolution passed by the Corresponding Society on the 27th of March, and communicated to the Society for Constitutional Information, which was the foundation of the subsequent joint proceedings of the two Societies, states the object of the Convention to be for the purpose "of securing themselves from future illegal and scandalous prosecutions, to prevent a repetition of wicked and unjust sentences, and recall those wise and wholesome laws which have been wrested from them." Terms which appear to your Committee to be material, not so much on account of their general inflammatory tendency, as because they evidently point at obtaining a redress of supposed grievances, not by application to Parliament, but by acts of authority to be exercised by themselves.

The resolutions afterwards passed on the 14th of April contain open attacks on all the branches of the Legislature, and a direct invitation to the people to resist measures then in the contemplation of the Legislature; and expressly stating that they ought equally to be resisted, whether adopted with or without the consent of Parliament.

When, in addition to these considerations, the Committee reflect on the leading circumstances which they have already stated, of the declared approbation, at an early period, of the doctrine of the *Rights of Man*, as stated in Paine's publications; of the Connection and Intercourse with French Societies, and with the National Convention; and, of the subsequent approbation of the French System; and consider that these are the principles which the promoters of a Convention evidently make the foundation of all their proceedings; they are satisfied that the design now openly professed and acted upon, aims at nothing less than what is stated in his Majesty's message, and must be considered as a traiterous conspiracy for the subversion of the established Laws and Constitution, and the introduction of that system of anarchy and confusion which has fatally prevailed in France.

There still remains two points connected with what has been already stated, which your Committee have not yet had the opportunity of investigating as fully as they wish, but which appear too important to be wholly passed over:

It appears to your Committee, that in some of the Societies referred to, proposals have been received, and that measures have recently been taken, for providing

viding arms to be distributed among the Members of the Societies.

It also appears, from such information as your Committee have hitherto had the opportunity of receiving, that since the apprehension of the persons in whose custody the papers were found which have been referred to your Committee, there have been several Meetings of the Societies in different parts of the metropolis ; that the designs which were before entertained have been by no means abandoned ; and that on the contrary there have been some indications of a disposition to concert means for forcibly resisting such measures as may be taken for defeating their accomplishment, or for bringing the authors and abettors of them to justice.

END OF THE FIRST REPORT.

[43]

It is also to be distributed among the members of the Society.

It also appears that the Committee have decided to publish a book on the subject of the Society's work, which will be distributed to all members of the Society. The book will contain a full account of the Society's work during the past year, and will also contain a list of the names of all the members of the Society. The book will be published in the form of a pamphlet, and will be distributed to all members of the Society free of charge.

THE END OF THE WORLD